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The Council of Seventy.

THE Council of Seventy held its first annual meeting at The University of Chicago on Friday and Saturday, December 11 and 12.

At this first meeting of the Council the following members were present: Professor C. F. Bradley, Dr. J. H. Breasted, Professor A. S. Carrier, Professor S. I. Curtiss, Dr. C. E. Crandall, Professor G. B. Foster, Professor O. H. Gates, Professor G. H. Gilbert, Professor G. S. Goodspeed, President W. R. Harper, Professor Shailer Mathews, Dr. C. W. Votaw, Dr. H. L. Willett, Professor A. C. Zenos. Letters from thirty-four absent members were read. The following additional persons were voted into membership, conditional on their acceptance of the invitation: Professor G. L. Robinson, Toronto, Canada; Professor Nathaniel Schmidt, Cornell University; Professor Francis Brown, Union Theological Seminary; Professor A. W. Anthony, Cobb Divinity School; Professor John H. Kerr, San Francisco Theological Seminary; Professor D. A. Hayes, Garrett Biblical Institute; Professor E. I. Bosworth, Oberlin Seminary; Professor W. A. Stevens, Rochester Theological Seminary; Professor Marvin R. Vincent, Union Theological Seminary; Professor J. H. Thayer, Harvard University; Professor J. W. Platner, Harvard University; Professor E. K. Mitchell, Hartford Theological Seminary.

In addition to the members of the Council there were present several delegates from western colleges, Professor Chapin of Beloit, Professor Fowler of Knox College, President Chaffee of Pella, Iowa, and others.

The President's annual report showed the following results of the work of the American Institute of Sacred Literature through the past year:

Correspondence schools.—Students in Hebrew, 75; in New Testament Greek, 44; in English Bible, 15, and in Arabic, 1. In this department is recorded the affiliation with the Kansas Biblical Institute and the Central Wesleyan College.

Reading work.—In the Guild there were 258 members, one-half of whom were men. The following occupations of members show the

field into which this course has entered: Ministers, housewives, teachers, missionaries, merchants, lawyers, stenographers, clerks, bankers, college students, telegraph operators, printers, bookkeepers, artists, chemists, professors, engineers, librarians, laborers, physicians, manufacturers.

In the Outline Club Course the total number of members in America and Australia was 4240. These included, in America, 2051 studying in clubs and 989 studying alone. The following organizations were represented: Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, Epworth League, King's Daughters, Women's Christian Temperance Union, Young Women's Christian Temperance Union, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, St. Andrew's Brotherhood, and the Baptist Young People's Union. These were from eighteen religious denominations, the Presbyterian, Methodist Episcopal, and Baptist leading.

Summer schools.—Fifteen summer schools, varying in length from 10 days to 12 weeks, were held. In these schools 33 instructors were employed and 58 courses offered. A total of nearly 3000 persons received instruction.

Literature issued.—(a) Circulars, 500,000; (b) instruction sheets to members, 110,000; (c) 16 essays, and 64 special studies.

This report was followed by a discussion of the platform of the Council, the formation of guilds, and the addition of an associate membership.

The afternoon was further taken up with a discussion of Bible study in the college, opened by Professor Shailer Mathews. The remarks were in brief as follows; "Colleges fall in this matter into three classes: those which give no Bible instruction whatever; those which give a brief time, perhaps an hour a week, to general ethical instruction from the Bible, and those which have systematic elective courses in the Bible. The aim should be to secure the last named kind of biblical work in all colleges. The Council of Seventy should give its efforts and influence to securing this. The data of biblical teaching in all American colleges should be gathered by the Council, and then a systematic and prolonged attempt should be made to introduce biblical instruction where now there is none, and to improve the character of it where it already exists.

"The aim of the Bible study in colleges should be primarily for those who do not expect to go into the ministry, but wish to be and need to be at least as well informed about biblical history, literature,

and teaching as they are about other departments of facts and thought. The courses should be elective and should be few in number, covering both Old and New Testaments, and should be historical in their nature, taking up facts, literature, and teaching."

As a result of this meeting a committee of five was appointed to investigate thoroughly the teaching of the Bible in American colleges, this committee to report and make suggestions at the next annual meeting. The members of this committee are Professor O. H. Gates, Professor C. F. Bradley, Professor W. J. Beecher, Professor F. K. Sanders, and Professor E. T. Harper.

Councilors and guests dined together at the Quadrangle Club. At the evening meeting, to which the ministers and Bible teachers of the city were invited, addresses were made upon "The Teaching of the Bible,—a New Calling," by President William R. Harper, Professor Richard G. Moulton, Rev. L. A. Crandall, and Professor Andrew C. Zenos. Mr. Dixon, Secretary of the Springfield School for Christian Workers, was present, and spoke of their work toward better Bible study in the Sunday schools.

On Saturday the chambers of the Council met in separate session and discussed the several subjects announced in the programme:

(1) The preparation of a list of Old and New Testament books for college and private libraries. Committees were appointed for the preparation of two lists, each list to include about 200 volumes, one to be purely scientific, the other to be popular in its nature. A brief description of the contents, position, and relative value of each book will accompany the title. The lists are to be revised at the next annual meeting, and later to be published.

(2) Special difficulties of the Bible teacher.

(3) The best order of Old and New Testament study.

The definition of the scope of the general chamber was changed to read: "The historical study of the religious ideas of the various sacred literatures of the world in their relation to one another, biblical theology being the central topic and receiving special attention;" or, more compactly, "Comparative theology, with emphasis on biblical theology."

These meetings were followed by a second session of the entire Council, and the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President of the Council, William R. Harper; Recorder, Dr. C. W. Votaw; Treasurer, Professor G. S. Goodspeed. OLD TESTAMENT CHAMBER.—Master, Professor A. S. Carrier; Scribe, Dr. H. L. Willett.

NEW TESTAMENT CHAMBER.—Master, Professor E. D. Burton ; Scribe, Professor G. H. Gilbert. GENERAL CHAMBER.—Master, Professor A. C. Zenos ; Scribe, Professor G. B. Foster.

It will be remembered that these officers, constituting the Senate of the Council, have immediate charge of the work of the American Institute of Sacred Literature for the ensuing year.

After luncheon at the Quadrangle Club the Council adjourned.

Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon this first meeting together of a body of men whose threefold purpose is, (1) to associate more closely those who desire to promote the study of the Bible from the historical standpoint, and of other sacred literature as related to it ; (2) to induce properly qualified persons to undertake this work either independently or in connection with another calling ; (3) to extend, through the American Institute of Sacred Literature, a wider acquaintance with the right methods of Bible study and their results.